

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1646

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 3512

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS:
SUBJECT: MURRAY SEEGER VISA REFUSAL

REF PRAGUE 3493

1. DCM'S DECEMBER 10 CALL ON MFA SIXTH DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR ZANTOVSKY ELICITED NO FURTHER EXPLANATION OF REASONS BEHIND GOC REFUSAL TO ISSUE VISA TO LA TIMES CORRESPONDENT MURRAY SEEGER FOR REPORTING ON VISIT TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA OF LA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA. ZANTOVSKY TOOK POSITION THAT HE WAS STILL "LOOKING INTO" THE MATTER, BUT THAT IT SOULD PROPERLY BE DISCUSSED WITH DIRECTOR KADNAR OF THE MFA PRESS DEPARTMENT.

2. DCM REITERATED AMBASSADOR'S REMARKS TO FOREIGN MINISTER CHNOUPEK THAT US ISSUANCE OF VISAS TO FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS IS DONE ON BASIS OF STRICT RECIPROCITY. DCM EXPRESSED PERSONAL VIEW THAT LA TIMES AND OTHER US JOURNALS MIGHT WELL BEGIN PRESSING THE DEPARTMENT

TO APPLY THIS RECIPROCITY, SINCE SEVERAL US JOURNALISTS HAVE BEEN REFUSED ENTRY TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN RECENT MONTHS, WHILE USG HAS NEVER DENIED VISA TO CZECHOSLOVAK JOURNALISTS.

3. EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE TO FOLLOW UP ON THIS MATTER WITH MFA PRESS OFFICE.
BYRNE

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